

**TESTIMONY OF NICOLE M. ROTHGEB,  
LIVINGSTON, ADLER, PULDA, MEIKLEJOHN & KELLY, P.C.  
CONCERNING HB 5381  
MARCH 5, 2020**

Representative Porter, Senator Kushner, and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

I write today as a partner in the labor and employment law firm of Livingston, Adler, Pulda, Meiklejohn & Kelly, P.C., and as the Immediate Past President of the Connecticut Employment Lawyers Association, to strongly support HB 5381, An Act Concerning Public Enforcement Actions And Forced Arbitration Agreements.

Our State has strong law and public policy designed to prevent employment discrimination in the workplace, encourage whistleblowers to bring unlawful conduct forward, and to prevent employer retaliation. Yet far too often workplace realities and the legal and practical obstacles that must be overcome, make it difficult if not impossible for employees to invoke such laws. This is especially true for low wage workers and for many of the classes of employees these laws were meant to protect. As a result, the State's policy goals are not achieved, and the improvements in our communities, the fairness for our working families and those good businesses that honor our laws, prove illusory. This law would create a powerful new tool for the State to realize its important civil rights goals and help restore a more level playing field for workers in Connecticut.

For this reason, our firm is proud to support this bill and to adopt the testimony of the Connecticut Trial Lawyers Association through Lewis Chimes. We commend the Committee for raising this bill and for once again taking action to protect and advance our State's civil rights agenda.